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THE POWER OF PENTECOST.

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THE POWER OF PENTECOST.

Chapters on the relation of the Holy Spirit to Christian Life and Service.

BY

THOMAS WAUGH.

Eighth Edition, making Thirty-five Thousand.

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To
My Dear Wife,
without
whose loving self-sacrifice
and
prayerful sympathy
much
of my work would be
impossible.

PREFACE.

BEHIND these printed words there is the emphasis, born of intense conviction, that the need of all needs in the Christian Church to-day is "The Power of Pentecost." Several of the papers appeared in the *Methodist Times*, and are reprinted by the kind permission of the Rev. H. Price Hughes, M.A., and at the urgent request of many who were blessed in their perusal.

May HE whose presence and power is the subject of this little volume use it in hasting "the Crowning Day" for which we toil and pray.

T. W.

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The Power of Pentecost.

The Power of Pentecost.

Chapter I.

BEFORE turning to what the Word of God has to say, both on the negative and positive sides of this important question, it may help us all if we get a glimpse of the wide-spread crying need for a Pentecostal awakening in the Church of God.

The keen controversy raging round the subject of holiness; the growing spirit of enquiry about its meaning and principles; the ever-widening interest taken in meetings held for its advocacy; and the growing desire for books and papers that deal with it; all point in one direction. An ever-increasing number of the people of God realize that we need something higher and fuller than most of us possess, and they believe that it is only here where this greatest need of present-day Christianity can be met. They thank God for

having received the life which Jesus came to bring, but at the same time are painfully conscious of their deep need of something more. They long for the richer, deeper, higher life—the "life more abundantly," which Christ has made possible to all His followers.

I.—*We need the power of Pentecost in our individual relations to God.*

The conditions of Christian life and discipleship are vastly different now from what they were at the beginning. We have no risks of life or goods to run as the early Christians had, and we know little or nothing of "resisting unto blood." Yet, just because the world seems more friendly to the church, the temptations we have to meet are all the more subtile and dangerous. The world's bland smile is so deceiving, and its enticements so alluring, that friendship with it is largely forgotten to be "enmity to God." Its secularizing spirit has leavened the church till large numbers of Christians have almost imperceptibly lost nearly all

the spiritual life they ever had. Tens of thousands hardly know whether they are Christians or not. They know nothing of constant, moment-by-moment victory, but fall before temptation daily. They know nothing of "praying in the Holy Ghost," therefore they have no clear sense of need, and no deep encouraging assurance of God's longing and power to answer. They are not filled with His intercessory grace of prayer, and enswathed in His atmosphere, and hence have no knowledge of constant ready access to the Father. They are conscious of His presence now and again, like a friend who calls in passing the house, and so they can only at intervals struggle into the spirit of prayer for a few brief and languid moments. With many even these times are a half penance, because their souls are so full of lower claims and purposes.

They have no abiding joy and gladness, because they so often grieve the Spirit of God, who alone can give the blessed assurance of our being right with God.

They do not *live* in any deep, full, all-conquering sense, they simply spiritually *exist*. Instead of a robust, abounding, all-victorious participation in the life of the risen Christ, they are feeble as children, and too often utterly powerless in the presence of temptation.

Many of these are weary and sick of this low level of Christian life, and hunger for something better. They ask half despairingly if there is not something higher and richer that Christ has made possible for them. Is this fluctuating, up-and-down, now conquering, now defeated, now repenting, and then sinning again, kind of life all they can attain to? Are they always to live at this poor dying rate? Can there be no other relation to sin than this of uncertainty and intermittent triumph? Can our Captain lead us no further in this fight than to the bitter wail, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

Robbed of the peace and joy which are their heritage; ashamed of the broken

vows and unfulfilled pledges which so thickly strew the path behind them; bitterly lamenting, in their better moments, the dishonour done to Christ and His cause by their many failures and defeats; they long for a better and higher life. They read of abiding victory, yet they are constantly falling before the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil. In their vows and songs they crown Christ "Lord of all," yet much of their inner life seems to be completely at the mercy of His foes. They know of their Lord's legacy of peace, yet their souls are often full of uncertainty and unrest. They hear of an exultant, triumphant faith that conquers the world and defeats the Prince of Darkness, yet their souls are sorely discouraged by endless, humiliating defeats. They know they are called to a constant zeal and an unremitting toil for the salvation of others, yet the most they can do is now and again a fitful, spasmodic effort without any real power. They know just nothing of the luxury and gladsome might of

"a heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathise." This is the state of many who ask us with tears in their eyes if there is not something more that they need, and something better they may claim.

II.—*We need the Power of Pentecost in our witnessing.*

We rejoice in having Christ our High Priest to represent us before the Father. It is a high and noble privilege indeed, but it brings to us a great and solemn responsibility, for we are called as Christ's disciples to represent Him down here. By virtue of our union with Him, and consequent sympathy with His redeeming purposes, we are His witnesses among men. In the power of His resurrection life we are to live before them and shew them in our lives what He can do in and through all who love and trust Him. Many around us know nothing of Christ, except what they see of Him in our conduct. They form many of their conceptions of Christianity from what they see

of its working in the daily walk of His disciples. Thousands on every side never read the Bible, but they do read those who profess to shape their lives according to its teachings. They scan our conduct with searching, eagle glance, and many of them will rejoice if they can find therein an excuse for their own Christlessness. Few things should make us hunger more for a holy life than the knowledge that the *godly man is the ungodly man's Bible*, and many around us read no other. When God gave to Israel the glorious promise of full cleansing and spiritual renovation, recorded in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel, it was for His own "name's sake," that it might be hallowed among the heathen before whom they had profaned it. This explains the responsibility of being "living epistles of Christ," known and read by our fellowmen.

In the present-day multiplication of religious tracts, papers, periodicals, and magazines, there is so much easy, cheap reading provided for those in and near the church of God, that many read little

else. Amid the engrossing claims and intense friction and pressure of life, they gradually get to allow others to do their thinking for them, and the solid, brain-taxing reading of the past is largely neglected. Very few will now read Paley's Evidences or Butler's Analogy, yet seldom have *Christian evidences* been read more, or with keener scrutiny, than to-day. Only they are not those bound in boards, calf, or morocco, but in silk, winsey, broadcloth, and fustian. They do not stand in silent rows on wooden shelves, but are sitting under the Gospel on Sunday, and moving in home, office, shop, or mart on every other day. The only Christian evidences read by thousands to-day are the men and women who claim to be Christians.

We are living in critical days, when every claim is severely tested. Except by the weak and thoughtless slaves of Sacerdotalism, who sacrifice the rights of manhood and womanhood by handing over their judgment and conscience to the keeping of another, most people in

these days test creed by conduct, and measure our blessings by our efforts to bless others. It was this that led our Lord to say, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;" and that called forth the Apostolic injunction, "Walk in wisdom towards them that are without." Here again, therefore, we see the great need of the masses of professing Christians receiving this "life more abundantly," that before the watchful eyes of the Christless they may walk more consistently.

× Looking at our past, the best among us can see such ghastly gaps between our ideal and our actual life, that we have no hard or unloving words about the failings of others. Yet, thank God, many of us have tasted and do know in glad certainty that there is a higher Christian life than the low type so fearfully common, and so widely popular. We know there is a life of closer communion with Christ, of richer experience of His saving, keeping grace,

which shines out upon men in a clearer, truer witness-bearing than that in which thousands are now resting.

The veriest tyro in Church-life knows that all the infidel lecturers and writers put together do not lead to one tithe of the practical scepticism which results from the low type of Christian living which is so prevalent. In bitter humiliation and in tears we have to acknowledge that nothing tends so much to make the outsider remain outside like the unseemly tempers, the self-seeking, the petty delinquencies, and the ghastly moral falls too common in the churches. It is when "pillars of the church" become *caterpillars* that they kill the fruit and bloom and beauty of the Church in the eyes of the world, and "cause the enemies of God to blaspheme." It is a sad pity for the unsaved that they should judge the Christian religion not by The Christ but by the failures among His professed followers. They grievously err in this, and yet we can understand their mistake. Samuel was right in believing the bleating of

those sheep rather than the protestations of the erring king, for sometimes the professions of men are false and misleading, but the voice of facts never.

It is heartbreaking, but painfully true, that there is no discernible difference in life between thousands of church members and thousands of the neglectors of Christ around them. They bear His sacred name and claim to be His followers, yet they only differ from the moral sceptic in attending a place of worship once or twice a week. Devout and reverent they may be while the service lasts, and real and true their spark of love for God, yet the echoes of the benediction have scarcely passed away till they are as utterly worldly as those who kept outside. Many Christian women are scarcely clear of the porch, till the Master, the message, and the holy song are forgotten. All dignified dulness is gone; all listlessness has passed away; and they can now stand a little excitement. They are once more their true unrestrained selves, and show where their hearts really are by

their choice of topics for conversation. With intensest eagerness they discuss Harry's prize at school, Lizzie's recent engagement, the beauty of Mrs. Gould's new sealskin jacket, or the probability of the weather being favourable for Mrs. Grandison's garden-party on Tuesday evening. Men, too, come from the sanctuary and act as if they had never been. They are as exacting with those under them, they are as eager in the race for wealth or worldly place and honour, and in their competition with their fellows are as utterly forgetful of the golden rule as the prayerless men with whom they mingle.

While these things are so; till we see the mighty host of God living lives of such faith, purity, and self-sacrifice; lives in such beautiful harmony with the known teaching of the Gospel, that there is a wide, clear gap between them and the most upright and moral among the Christless; much of our appeal to the world will be in vain. When the Church receives the answer to her prayer, "Hal-

lowed be Thy name," we shall see the answer to the next petition—"Thy kingdom come." She can only expect both as her members seek and claim "the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ."

The Need of all Needs.

Chapter II.

The Need of all Needs.

"*They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.*"
—Acts ii. 4.

BELIEVING the Pentecostal baptism to be the deepest, highest, and most urgent of all our needs to-day, the whole soul cries to that Spirit, that He may guide the pen and give "the thought that breathes, the word that burns."

It is hardly too much to say that in all His utterances, Christ never perplexed His disciples more than when He said to them, "It is expedient for you that I go away." For nearly three years He had gone in and out among them, their almost constant companion. Day after day they had listened to the music of His words and gazed upon the wonder of His deeds. Their dearest hopes for themselves and for their nation were centred in Him; their hearts had gone out to Him, they had learned to love Him. Then He said to

them, "I am going to leave you, and it is a good thing for you that I am." The cause of their perplexity is not far to seek. They had never grasped the meaning of His words when He had spoken to them of the coming of the Holy Ghost, who was to be His own continued life upon this earth. In a loving talk with them on the day of His ascension, He cheered and comforted them, roused their hopes, and braced them for the good-bye by making this all-important fact still clearer to them. He intimated that while he had made possible the salvation of men, the work of saving them was to devolve upon His followers. He had founded His Church and His disciples were to perpetuate the work He had begun. But He also made it very plain that the power through which they would accomplish this, was no power of their own, but a Divine might which would be imparted to them.

Having watched Him taken up into Heaven, they went back to the city to tarry till they received "the promise of

the Father." As those ten days of eager, expectant longing passed, the promise that rang in their souls was, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." They held on to this and claimed its fulfilment. On the tenth day (all-important day! Momentous day for one hundred and twenty men and women at that prayer-meeting! Momentous day for the surging crowd outside, and for millions still unborn!) the answer came and "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Before the shades of evening had settled down upon Jerusalem, three thousand people had been pricked to the heart and soundly converted to God.

Now before we go any further, let us try to remove a widespread—and in its consequences, terrible — misconception about these ten days of waiting. The command to "tarry," given to these first disciples *is not a command to us to-day.* Thousands act as if it were, and the loss to the Church of Christ through this mistake is incalculably, pitiably sad. *In relation* to the Holy Ghost, "tarry" is

not a New Testament word after the day of Pentecost. Yet thousands of poor Christians have spent years of unnecessary waiting for this baptism, through thinking that it is. How utterly indefinite are many of the prayers we hear offered for this filling with the Spirit! If we rise to the conditions of perfect surrender and trust upon which the Lord can give, this Pentecostal baptism is a *present blessing which we may have now.*

How many Christians believe this? Again and again, when we have set this before our people, and urged it earnestly, some one present has voiced the views of many with the following question: "If it were necessary for those early disciples to 'tarry' ten days before they could receive this fulness, on what ground do you argue that for us the 'tarrying' is unnecessary?" St. John gives to this question a beautiful answer. When Christ gave this command to the eleven, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given; for that Jesus was not yet glorified." The Holy Spirit had not yet come to His Church in

New Testament fulness, and for this reason they had to "tarry." "But," said a minister to us the other day, "was not the Holy Ghost always in the world among men?" Certainly, but not in the measure in which He is with us now in what is specially His own dispensation. Again and again Christ used words like these: "When He is come," and "When the Spirit of truth is come." If He was not to come in some fuller sense than that in which He was in the world already, these words have no meaning. What that fuller sense was, that glorious tenth day explained. He did come then, and thank God He has never been withdrawn. Thus *they* were bound to "tarry" for the enduement of power, but *we* may claim and take it even now.

While we thank God for the thousands who respond to Christ's call to "go and preach the Gospel," we cannot but be grieved over the patent fact that many of these earnest ones forget the other half of the command. We are not to "go" till we "be endued with power from on high."

In all kindness and sympathy we are forced to the conclusion that by thousands of sincere Christian workers, this direct command is utterly ignored. A very large proportion of disciples have no experimental knowledge of this glorious equipment for holy toil. We cannot too earnestly point out to them this terrible blunder. Nor can we too clearly shew them the almost absolute uselessness of rushing into Christian work without the first and highest qualification for it. But let us also make it plain that we are now living in the *dispensation of the Spirit*, and may therefore have *now* the fulness of power for which the first Christians had to wait. God is not honoured and there is no blessing for men in our waiting for months or years, as too many are doing, for that which God wants us to have, and which a perishing world needs us to have to-day. We are to *pray;* let us pray more than we do, but let us translate our "*tarrying*" into *trusting*. When the fulness is ours, we must still pray for the renewing of the

Holy Spirit. Those who were "filled" on the day of Pentecost were "filled" again.

Now as long as these early Christians leaned hard on the power of the Holy Spirit, and expected true results only as He wrought them, they were well nigh irresistible. The shed blood of the saints only enriched the ground for the raising of grander harvests. The bitter persecutions that fell upon them only converted the members of the Church into missionaries. It simply sent them into all the regions round about, with hearts of love and tongues of flame, to tell the glad tidings of salvation. Wherever they went, "the Lord went with them, confirming the Word with signs following." Idolatry was shattered, pagan temples were emptied, and the converts were multiplied by hundreds and thousands. In a very short time the tide of victory had rolled to Rome, and in the imperial court of Cæsar there were loyal followers of the crucified Nazarene.

About the morning of the fourth cen-

tury, the Emperor Constantine professed discipleship to Jesus, and was baptized. Then the Christian Church committed a blunder from which she has never recovered. She widened her borders without any corresponding purity and power. She transferred her dependence from Divine power to the smile of royalty and the patronage of a throne. The Bride of Christ entered into an adulterous marriage with the secular power. From that day the reins of the Church gradually passed into the hands of priests and popes, with disastrous results. From that time the whole Western Church steadily drifted into the midnight darkness of the Middle ages, from which she was only roused by the trumpet voice of Martin Luther. It is not too much to say that the Church of God in Great Britain stands in grave peril of repeating this blunder in these days.

No words should be needed to show that something is terribly wrong in the work of the Church to-day. A single glance at the difference between the magnificent success of the early Church

and our meagre triumphs now-a-days, makes it plain that some great essential is wanting. Of the sacerdotal churches we cannot speak in this matter. When churches go back from the dispensation of the Spirit to a religion of forms and ceremonies—when they substitute salvation by sacrament for salvation through personal faith in Christ—their membership conveys no idea as to the number of Christians among them. Membership in such folds is often a widely different thing from discipleship in Christ's Church. But speaking of the evangelical churches, membership is yet our best way of reckoning progress. In most of them it is practically at a standstill, while the population is increasing by leaps and bounds. Year by year, as we get a glimpse at returns, we rejoice in the scores and hundreds who have been won for Christ, yet weep that they are so few. We win one here, and a score there, and praise God as we see them. Then as we realise that the vast masses around us, live, walk through life by our side, and then die

Christless, the anguish is often such as only God must see.

As we think of the thousands of educated, earnest ministers, and the magnificent army of consecrated lay toilers, male and female, who are working for Britain's salvation; as we think of the costly, massive, yet flexible machinery now in use in the churches; as we think of the rapid strides of civilization and the marvellous facilities it brings for spreading the Gospel; as we think of the stream of gold constantly flowing, the torrent of prayer which is constantly rising; as we remember the rain of sympathetic tears falling daily about the souls of men, and then see how much of it all counts for little or nothing,—we cannot but see that there is something terribly wrong. The land is networked with churches, and the multiplication of ecclesiastical agencies is marvellous. Earnest thousands are giving their time, their money, their strength, aye, some are giving their very lives, to save their fellow-men. In spite of it all, the mass of the men of Europe stand aloof

from Christ and treat our evangel with a sullen, severe indifference. Most of these toilers are so sincere that this comparative failure is all the more painful. The sad waste of power, money, sympathy, and toil which results from the want of something to make it *tell*, is all the more bitterly heartbreaking.

What is the matter? Where is the weak place in the Church of God among men to-day? How is it that it is becoming more and more difficult in nearly every place to get men and women converted to God? Why is it so much harder now than from twenty to fifty years ago to get men and women in large numbers to break with a worldly life and become out-and-out in their stand for Christ? Has the Church of God become lazy? No doubt there are lazy people in it; but that is not the weak place. Since the first fifty years of the Christian era there have never, perhaps, been so many consecrated men and women toiling for the salvation of men as there are to-day. The activities of the Church are simply wonderful, and

thousands of her toilers make us praise God. They are so earnest and sincere, too, that the failure of the Church to conquer the world makes us all the more sad.

It is not for want of advice, for that flows into the Church in streams. Her drawers are full of prescriptions, and she is weary of nostrums. She only needs to get back into her native air—the breezes of the Holy Ghost—to become once again robust and beautiful. A few years ago this burning question was discussed at the annual gathering of one of the great free churches, and many wise and good men tendered their counsels. One pleaded for more intellectual sermons. He pointed out the marvellous advance of education and the wonderful multiplication of scholastic agencies. The ministers were then urged to read the best books, to keep in touch with all the literary movements of the day, and to be abreast with modern thought in every subject. Another pointed to the growth of culture in our times, and urged the adoption of more classical

music, a more ornate liturgy, and a higher appeal to the æsthetic in all our services. Others complained of being bound by a too narrow creed and a too restricted Church polity; they complained of bondage, and cried out for a free hand and a larger liberty.

There is something in all these hints, and we have nothing to say against them; but they do not go to the root of the matter. It is claimed by many that social conditions to-day are terribly against the Church in her work, and no doubt they are. But when we think of the fearful array of antagonistic forces that fronted the Apostolic Church, and the victories they won in spite of them, even this will not account for our position and widespread defeat in these days.

Then, what is the matter? What is this great something which is lacking? What is the power for the want of which so much sincere Christian work to-day yields so little result? What is there wanting in connection with Christian toil that so often leads earnest souls to burst

into tears and say, "I can hardly go on: so much we do seems to be in vain, and the end we seek looks as far off as ever?" What is this need of all needs in the Church of God to-day?

The Age of Activity.

Chapter III.

The Age of Activity.

WE closed our last paper with the question: How are we to account for the fearful gap between our Christian activities and practical results? How is it that with such a host of noble toilers, and such vast resources at our disposal, the outcome is so bitterly disappointing? We affirm that the true answer is this: *The Church of God is not to-day as she was at the beginning, "filled with the Holy Ghost."* This baptism is our great need, underlying all our other needs, and until that is met we shall have no general revival of the work of God on a great scale.

Our danger is to rely upon men, methods, and money, instead of relying upon Him who alone can raise up the men and equip them, suggest the methods and vitalize them, bring in the money and make it a blessing when we have got it.

Take the men as an illustration. When Christ founded His Church He wanted a dozen men with whom to begin the work. Where did He get them? Did He send to Greece to seek them among the cultured, philosophic disciples of Socrates and Plato? Did he go to Rome and seek in that home of legislative genius and military prowess disciples hardened and trained by severe discipline? No! He mostly tramped along the shingly shores of the Sea of Galilee, and selected men with hard hands and brown sunburnt faces, but men whose hearts could be made big enough to enwrap a whole world in their love and sympathy. He sent these men to college for three years at His own blessed feet (and unless a man has been to that college you can never make him a minister by sending him to any other). At the end of that time they graduated with their S.W. They were soul-winners of such a type that their names are scarcely ever rightly heard in these days but they bring inspiration and help to the hearers.

We shall not be misunderstood here. There is nothing in the highest intellectual culture that need interfere with the saving of men. One of the mightiest soul-winners the world ever knew was a keen scholar. St. Paul's was a master mind, he was a giant in intellect, yet his supreme passion was to win men to Christ, and thousands were the crown of his rejoicing. By all means let us culture the mind as much as possible. God expects us to make every gift we hold as effective as it can be. Not one word do we say against culture and refinement. The Lord expects every disciple of his to be a lady or a gentleman according to the sphere in which we move. There are no sanctions for vulgarity in the Word of God—"be courteous." These things give a polish to the shaft that often makes it pierce the deeper in the holy war.

In these things the Church is growing rich. There never were so many scholarly and gifted men in God's army as to-day. We give them a hearty welcome and long for more. It is a cause for profound

thankfulness that the Church of Christ sees the value of these things, and gives the utmost encouragement to men of high scholastic attainments, and men gifted in scientific research and knowledge, to enter her ranks. She was never so rich in gifts as she is now, but the deepest need is not so much for *gifts* as for *graces*. A Hallelujah lassie who left a Lancashire cotton mill only three months ago, if filled with the Holy Ghost, will do more real work in building the city of God, than the longest-headed D.D. in the land who has not got this glorious anointing. If he also has this fulness he will accomplish more than the lassie, for he has more gifts, more machinery. But if he has only the gifts, and she has the holy unction, then for the work of God we prefer the lassie to the Doctor of Divinity.

With all our profound respect for scholarship and mental gifts, the men who hold them cannot do, and never have done, all the good work in the Christian Church. We have all known or heard of men utterly illiterate who have turned

a multitude to God. Men who knew nothing of society culture, and who never heard of Lindley Murray, who have spoken words which fell upon the hearts of their hearers like living fire. Certainly we want more men of the highest possible gifts and human qualifications, but still more urgent is our need of more of the power of God. Whatever the men, whatever their gifts, whatever our legislation and methods, and whatever the temporal wealth of the Church, it is all so much dead machinery, unless it be vitalized and made effective by the mighty power of the Spirit of Pentecost.

The activities of the Church to-day are wonderful, and we cannot be too grateful for them; yet how heart-breaking is our progress! The reason is that, with all our activities, the spiritual tone of the Church is low, the temperature is terribly down. There is not heat enough to ripen the fruit. The only heat that can ripen fruit for God's garner is the fire of Pentecost. That fire comes upon the churches in answer to prayer, and too many

churches have almost given up praying. Thank God, many churches pray more than ever, and many individual Christians too. Nevertheless, a number of churches have lost their love for, and their confidence in, what our forefathers understood by united prayer.

It is comparatively easy in most places to get a score of Christians to sit for two hours arranging a bazaar. It is not difficult to get twice as many to spend three hours arranging a Sunday School excursion or a Band of Hope picnic. In how many churches could we get as many people to come to a week-night prayer-meeting and stay as long? We have known cases where church officials, in leaving committee meetings, have found a few good souls waiting to occupy the room they have just left. When asked if they cannot stay, their answer has been, "It is *only* a prayer-meeting." And yet the Christian Church was born in a prayer-meeting; it was upon pleading men and women that the mighty chrism of the Spirit first fell.

We must have our ecclesiastical machinery as flexible as possible, and avail ourselves of every adaptation in liturgy and form of service that will make us more effective for God and men. We must grasp every pure and legitimate aid within our reach, that will help us to make the spirit of our times minister to the progress of the Gospel. Yet we must remember that our distinctive genius from the beginning has been the soul-converting, soul-sanctifying unction of the Holy Spirit. Should we forget this, our Church will become a spiritual mausoleum and our record of membership the mere census of a cemetery.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the world to-day is in a tremendous hurry. The word *fast* is about the best word for expressing the time-spirit of present-day life. Instead of the Church evangelizing the world, the world has had considerable success in secularizing the Church. So the spirit of the world has got into the Church. In the Church, as in the world, it is in many places all hurry, rush, con-

fusion, and din. A lot of good Christians are so busy they have no time to do anything. They have so much to do they get nothing done. Their hands are so full their hearts get empty. They are so much with men they have little or no time to be with God. There is a fearful disproportion between their own spiritual state and the large amount of Christian work they have in hand. Thus so much work, earnestly, sincerely done, counts for little or nothing.

We once heard a Methodist minister called "a circuit machine." If the charge was true, we sympathize with the man most sincerely. All toilers for God stand in this same danger. Unless we are much with God our spiritual touch and freshness wear off. The power is then largely gone, and our work becomes formal and prefunctory. The scythe needs sharpening or it will cease to cut. The bow must be resined or the music will cease. We must get to God for the renewal of our inward man, and the restoration of the spiritual power we have given off in help-

ing others. Waiting upon Him, all our powers through which the Spirit works are toned anew, and thus the Spirit's might makes our work fresh and effective.

In theory, the evangelical churches all believe this firmly. They are ever ready to quote and endorse the text, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." The pity is that there is often such a wide gap between our creed and our conduct. How many churches realize that a minister is no accredited messenger of God unless he has the anointing of the Spirit of God? How many believe that only God can make a minister, and send him to the right sphere of toil? People sometimes tell us what a nice man their minister is, and how much they like both him and his sermons. Then they sadly add, "but he is not the man for this place." When we ask them how and where they got him, the answer is not "from God." Again and again when we have asked church officials enquiring after a minister, if they had *asked the Lord* to send them a man, they

have stared at us as if we were mad. Yet no man can do the highest, truest work of a minister unless he be "a man sent from God."

The same is too sadly true on the other side. When we want laymen to fill our important church offices we do not always keep to Apostolic lines in our selections. We do not as a rule look upon spiritual-mindedness as the first qualification. We do not, like the early Christians, look first for "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" to take charge of the work. Too often we look for social status, municipal prestige, or the power to stand an adverse balance at the bank without any inconvenience. Consecrated cash, money held in stewardship and not in ownership is a mighty power in Christian work. But it can be bought too dearly. It is not the first qualification for office in the Christian Church. The result of our blunder is that many a cause is paralysed, and the minister's hands are tied because some of the most important offices in the church are filled by unspiri-

tual men. Men are in power who have no close communion with Christ, and no keen sympathy with His mission to perishing men.

The Church of Christ is supernatural in her origin and in her destiny, and can only be perpetuated in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. It is only in Him that we have Christ here on earth, and he is here to work out, through His people, the programme that Christ made possible. He is the great administrator of the New Covenant, and *there is really nothing done in the Kingdom of God on earth except what He does.* Can we wonder, then, that with Him so often forgotten or ignored in His own dispensation, there is so little reaping done in the great harvest field of His Kingdom? He uses men, methods, and money, and we need them all. But unless He uses them they are no use in the work of saving men.

When the manifestoes of the churches get back in tone to the Acts of the Apostles; when the great theme is again the

wondrous power and working of the Holy Spirit; when all our arrangements, plans, and financial schemes are drawn up under His sought guidance; when we realize that unless He chooses to use and bless them they are all utterly in vain; when we have fewer committees and more consecration, less policy and diplomacy and more Divine power; when we spend less time in wire-pulling and more time in pleading, less time in tinkering and polishing the machinery, and more time in praying for the force which alone can drive it; then shall we be much nearer the fulfilment of the promise, "a nation shall be born in a day."

Pentecostal Results.

Chapter IV.

Pentecostal Results.

IN earlier chapters we have tried to shew that the deepest need of present-day Christianity is a general baptism of the Holy Ghost. In doing so we have looked at the distressing want of proportion between the prayers, gifts, and toil of the church, and the practical results in the conversion of sinners. In seeking for the cause of this, it has become plain that the place of the Holy Spirit in His Church and His relation to her work are largely forgotten. And this, too, in His own dispensation. It is now for us to glance at some of the results that would follow a heart-breaking recognition of this need, and its being met in a general Pentecost.

One of the saddest results of the dearth of conversions in these days is that many Christian people have ceased to expect them, or to trouble about the want of them. The wide-spread contentment in

the Church with her present slow rate of spiritual progress is one of the most disheartening signs of our times. Worse than that, many publicly speak against such results, and warn people against such manifestations. Good people sometimes tell us "they like the old-fashioned way of having people converted in ones and twos." They have no sympathy with modern efforts to win people to God in scores and hundreds. Thank God when ones and twos are led to Christ, but this is not the whole of "the old-fashioned way." St. Luke tells us of "many" and of "thousands" turning to God in one day. Contentment with only ones and twos is left to present-day thoughtless or cruel indifference to the peril of perishing men. It means that a fearfully large proportion of the Christless men and women around us must of necessity die in their sins.

Amid all this there are thousands who long for, pray for, toil for, aye, and look for victories on a Pentecostal scale. They will come as a result of a Pentecostal baptism

of fire. It is quite true that in the relations of political parties, of capital and labour, of rich and poor, to each other, there are huge difficulties facing the hosts of God. Yet, in view of the marvellous gifts and resources of every kind of the Christian Church in these days, her difficulties are few and small, compared with the difference between the natural equipment of the Pentecostal hundred and twenty, and the hatred and prejudices of the seething masses they had to front. The church has her obstacles, but if once again she were bathed in holy flame, they would wither before her like autumn grass before a prairie fire. The anguish of Zion's travail would be lost in the joy of a nation born for God. The tears of a host of weary, disappointed toilers, would be dried in the joy of harvest. The broken hearts of thousands of saved parents would be bound up in gladness and filled with gratitude and praise. In a thousand homes weary, waiting Christian wives would have their burden lifted in their husbands being married to Christ.

An army of children would get fathers who could lead them in their life and fight for Jesus. In every hamlet, village, town, and city, dens would become homes, and the voice of cursing would be turned into family praise and prayer. The young people in our Sunday Schools, instead of drifting away into the world and wasting the bloom and strength of their lives in folly and sin, would turn to God and train for fuller and higher service in the future. The teachers, so long, so sorely, so often disappointed, would toil and pray in hope, and reap in gladness. The bitter wail of failure, and the tone of regret so often pervading our annual church gatherings would be turned into tidings of wide-spread victory and joy.

It is bitterly humiliating to think of the godless, worldly expedients resorted to in many places in order to entice people to come and hear the Gospel. Sham theatricals, giddy concerts and entertainments, tableaux vivants, comic songs, etc., have in many places become the

order of the day. Many churches are now mere concert halls or social clubs, and their highest work seems to be to provide amusement and recreation for the people. Very often the placards announcing these things are so flaringly worldly that the infidel in passing says "their Jesus is played out, and they have now to imitate the circus and the theatre." In some churches they now advertise "pleasant Sunday evenings for the people," as if our mission was to make things so pleasant for God's enemies that they are not likely to realize their need of becoming His friends.

How painful is all this when we remember that it is absolutely unnecessary! There is a better way of filling churches than these, and that is the old way—God's way. Let the church claim her Pentecostal birthright and God will multiply her with triumphs. These triumphs will lead to others, for nothing brings people to God's House like other people being brought to God. When Lazarus was raised from the dead the people "flocked

to Bethany," and they do the same in these days. There is a mighty charm—a great attractiveness about young converts. The crowd likes to see the man who has just been saved. Show me a place where week after week men and women are converted to God, and I will shew you a place to which people will delight to come.

What a splendid answer we should then have to the painful and oft-recurring question, "What can we do to keep the young people in our leading families from leaving us, as so many of them do?" Nothing can keep them with us as a whole unless they get converted. This will never be till the church is filled with the converting power of the Holy Ghost. Any farmer will tell you that the best tether for straying cattle is a good pasture. If filled with conquering might, everything that is cold, formal, and repellent in services would be done away, and they would be homely and sunny and musical with the hope and joy of victory.

It is no secret that in hundreds of churches and scores of circuits it is almost a year-long agony to keep up the finances. From year-end to year-end it is one long strain just to keep their heads above water and pay their way. In many places the devices resorted to in order to raise funds for church purposes are an utter disgrace to Christianity. In others, ministers and officials beg subscriptions from men of such godless character, or men engaged in business of such a sort, that the world jeers and mocks and the infidel makes merry in meetings where the name of Christ is blasphemed. Some of us have crimsoned with shame when church officers have boasted of the money they have got from men who have made their wealth out of the anguish and shame of others.

This, also, is absolutely unnecessary. For growth and fulness, generosity, like nearly every other Christian grace, is largely a question of temperature. When the spiritual tone of the church is high, it nearly always follows that the funds

are in a flourishing condition. The filling of a man's heart with the love of God means the opening of his heart to the needs of men. When a man is full of God he is full of love, and *love is always a cheerful giver* and gives its very best. When a man's own religious life is deep and full and enthusiastic, he is prepared to make sacrifices in order to bring that religion within reach of others. Thus, when the church gets a Pentecost, the generosity of the people will be set free, for, as in the olden time, God would "put it into their hearts" to give freely.

Ministers often tell us with pain and tears in their tones that they have very little time for the best work. Their hours, their hearts, and their hands are so full with "serving tables," that they can do very little of a minister's best and highest work. Bazaars and other schemes for raising money have to be organized. Difficulties are constantly arising which bring them no end of burden and care. For want of more spiritual life in the church, self-will, jealousy, and other un-

Christian tempers crop up among the members and workers that give exceeding trouble and pain. Hours are often wasted in committee and other meetings through childish wranglings and misunderstandings. Sleepless hours, wet eyes, heavy hearts, and weeks of patient, careful work many have in keeping church members from quarrelling, or in reconciling those who are estranged. The church is swarming with members who ought to have been toiling for God years ago, but who have remained in spiritual babyhood. They fill the hands of those who have to train them, and are a fearful burden to the whole church.

Nothing but the baptism of fire for which we plead can put these things right. Filled with the Spirit, the Church would be full of love; full of love, these jealousies would pass away; the Lord's will would take the place of self-will, and the troubles and difficulties that arise from it would cease. The breezes of the Holy Spirit are the native air of the Christian, and in this the young converts

would grow well. With better examples around them, and living in a purer spiritual atmosphere, they would the sooner go on to Christian manhood and womanhood, and there would be fewer aged babies to burden and trouble the earnest few.

There is no hive with so many drones in it as the Lord's hive. Christ's is the only army in which one-fourth of the soldiers have to spend half their time in trying to urge the other three-fourths up to the front to do a bit of fighting. In most Christian churches nearly all the practical work of saving men is left to a mere handful, and the rest of the members are content to act as hangers-on. The excuses made by many in the majority are trivial and pitiable to the last degree; sons of God without any practical interest in their Father's business; claiming to have received the greatest boon a man can know on earth, yet doing nothing to get others to have it; telling us they are going to heaven, yet not moving a hand to try and take someone

else with them. Some of these will pay others to do the work, but will not touch it themselves. They hear the Divine call, "Who will go for us?" and their only answer is, "Here am I; send somebody else?" Some are even angry and look as if we had insulted them when we try to show them that every saved person is intended to be a missionary to others.

For this strange and sad state of affairs there is but one cure. The reason why many Christians don't do much to save others is, they are not much saved themselves. They have so little religion, and it does so little for them, that they naturally do little to get other people led to it. They have so much trouble keeping the faint spark from dying out that they have neither time nor incentive to trouble about those who have not got it. But let the host of God to-day get what those one hundred and twenty got in that upper room, and what a change would be seen! Their own spiritual life full, and deep, and rich, all would long for others to share in such a blessing. Their own relation to Christ

being the grandest and most blessed fact in their lives, they would be enthusiasts in trying to win others to Him who had done so much for themselves. There is no doubt of this. Next to a glad obedience to Christ in all things, there is no better test of a man's own spiritual state than his efforts for the salvation of others. The more we read the past, the more we read the New Testament, the more we read the signs of our times, the more evident it becomes to us that *a general baptism of the Holy Spirit is the greatest need of present-day Christianity.*

The Spirit of Purity.

Chapter V.

The Spirit of Purity.

"*The spirit of holiness.*"—Romans i. 4.

HAVING dwelt on the great need of a *general* Pentecost, we will now turn our thoughts to that *personal* Pentecost which is the birthright of every child of God, and touch upon some of its effects upon the individual; what it means, in other words, to "be filled with the Spirit."

To be filled with the Holy Spirit means to be *filled with purity*. The first effect of this baptism of fire is to destroy sin in the soul. Christ was "manifested to destroy the works of the devil." The Holy Spirit is Christ's continued life upon earth, and always works to fulfil Christ's purpose. He is here to work out what Christ has made possible, and when we allow Him to have all His own way with us, and fully trust Him, His first business is to destroy the works of the devil in our hearts.

Our Lord's disciples illustrate this clearly. A glance at their conduct before Pentecost shows how deeply they needed the purifying which only Pentecost could bring. James and John, for instance, were splendid men, but they were very narrow and intolerant. Because he did not follow them, they harshly rebuked a man who was doing work of the noblest character. When a few timid Samaritan villagers refused to receive the Master, these zealous brothers wanted to wither them with fire from heaven. They were filled, too, with a small and unworthy ambition. They wanted to sit next to the Master when He took His throne. Fancy a lot of bearded men, during a personal and national crisis, wrangling about front seats in their Lord's coming kingdom!

Look at these same men after Pentecost! The narrowness and the paltry ambition are seen no more. James became the man mighty in prayer. John was made spiritual and lowly enough to catch the softest, sweetest whispers of Divine love, and to set them to music

which has comforted the Church of God for ages.

What an exhibition of moral cowardice Peter gave when fronted with the charge of that servant-girl! What a humiliating defeat for the strong, impulsive man! How his face must have flushed and his tears started when he thought of it in after years! Just six weeks after his fall Peter was filled with the Spirit, and at once his cowardice gave place to a holy boldness. Standing in front of the temple, in the presence of the rulers and the hierarchy, he kindly but bravely charged them with killing the Prince of Life.

Is it not this, my readers, for which you long so ardently to-day? You realize the great importance of being true witnesses for God among those who scan your life. For their sakes, apart from all else, you are ambitious to be as good as it is God's will you should be. You know that the only wealth worth the name is the Christlike in your own character. You feel that there is no beauty like the

"beauty of holiness," no dignity like real godliness, and no true nobility except nobility of soul. You realize that, whatever your past sorrows, none have been so keen as those that came to you through having grieved your Lord. You never want to wound His love again. You long to honour Him always in all things. Hence your deep heart-cry is to be cleansed from all sin; to have constant victory over all wrong.

If the answer comes to your prayer, the Holy Ghost must bring it, for there is no other way of cleansing. When God rings out the command to "cleanse ourselves," we can only do it by allowing Him to do it for us. This is the real meaning of all such exhortations. It is here where some of us blundered for years, and where thousands of sincere seekers are wrong to-day. We tried to cleanse our own hearts by our own efforts, by prayers, and struggles and tears. We tried to make the house within so beautiful that we might one day ask the King of glory to come in and fill us. The result was

failure and defeat till we were almost in despair about it.

The Lord never asks us, dear reader, to do any such thing. All He asks is *room*. He wants the keys of every room in our souls. Let Him have them; trust Him with them all, fully and gladly. *He* will then do what *we* must ever fail to do. He will come in "to fill and rule our hearts." He will do all the cleansing and all the furnishing and beautifying. He will bring the answer to your oft-repeated prayer:—

> Thou know'st the way to bring me back,
> My fallen spirit to restore;
> O! for Thy truth and mercy's sake,
> Forgive, and bid me sin no more;
> The ruins of my soul repair,
> And make my heart a house of prayer.

The shed blood of Christ has purchased for us the offices of the Holy Spirit, and He is the active agent in the cleansing of the soul. His supreme purpose is to work in us the Christ character. He is the *Holy* Spirit, and is very sensitive about the approach of sin in the soul of

the believer. It is He who shows us its hatefulness in the sight of God; how loathsome it is in view of the spotless purity of God. He leads us to dread and to hate all that is impure. He shows us how sensual, sordid, and envious feelings defile the heart, sully the spirit, mar our witness-bearing, and cripple us in holy toil. It is His power alone that keeps us sensitive to their presence, and He prompts the prayer for keeping grace. It is He, too, who answers the prayer by holding the heart against the foes outside.

He is the great illuminator who sheds a revealing light upon His own Word. He is our teacher, and interprets to us the message that makes us strong for the conflict and sustains our inner life. He constantly keeps before us the great fact that our great end is full conformity to the image of God's dear Son. He whispers to us how pleasing is the holy life in the sight of God, and how such a life honours God by attracting others from the darkness and discord of sin

into the light and harmony of God's kingdom.

He it is who alone can reveal the sin that lurks in our nature. He cannot bear it, and He flashes His light into all the crevices and crannies of our being. He often astounds us by revealing unholy motives, purposes, or feelings of which we were unconscious. As we rise higher in the Divine life, and our circle of light becomes wider, things may be seen to be wrong that were not wrong at a lower stage. These He gently points out, and in His delivering power we rise from victory to victory.

To some of you this fulness of the Spirit may come at first in the shape of a broken heart and a wet face. The Holy Ghost is *fire;* fire *burns*, and burning is not a pleasant process. This means that some of you in order to obtain this blessing may have to part with some pleasures and indulgences that are very dear to you. Never mind, this fire only burns up that which we are better without. You may enter this furnace without

fear, for the flame will only *burn off your bonds*, and those who watch you will see that there is some one with you "like the Son of God."

The Spirit of Gladness.

Chapter VI.

The Spirit of Gladness.

THIS is clearly brought out in the startling conjunction we have in the text—"Be not drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the Spirit." Here we have *spiritual exhilaration* enjoined upon us in place of a *sensuous exhilaration* which is condemned. There is something in us all which resents monotony, and repeatedly asks for a change. When kept for a long time under the one burden, at the same task, or touched by the same sorrow, there is something in our very constitution which calls for relief; a voice which calls for stimulus, for excitement, for some kind of break in the monotony.

We all know only too well how many people seek to gratify this craving in strong drink. Only too often we hear it said of such, "It drove him to the drink." Now He who has woven this desire into

our human nature has provided for its being met on highest and most helpful lines. He here says to us, "Do not seek this stimulus in strong drink. That too often deludes, demoralises, and damns. You may have what you need in another way, a way that will beautify and ennoble your own character, and fit you for living to nobler purpose for others. 'Be not filled with wine, . . . but be filled with the Spirit.'"

A glance at the context makes this plain in its reference to songs of gladness and truest melody of heart. It is clearly manifest, too, in its effects upon the disciples at Pentecost. When the inmates of that upper room received the fulness of the Spirit, and the glorious baptism began to manifest itself on legitimate lines, the people in the crowd who were not in the secret thought they were drunk. The Spirit-filled life is indeed a life of *real luxury*. There is no sanction whatever in the New Testament for that dignified dulness which many people evidently mistake for reverence.

It is perfectly true that the Holy Spirit leads us into soul-burden, sacrifice, hard toil, and often into tears. He brings us into a close sympathy with Christ in His great mission to sorrowing, perishing men. He works in us a tender compassion for the Christless which often makes the heart ache with keenest pain; yet He is "the Holy Ghost, *the Comforter.*" It is He who tells us of pardon and reconciliation to God. It is He who in the day of difficulty reminds us of past deliverance. It is He who, in the hour of sorrow, rings in our souls the promises of God, and whispers to us wonderful words about the tearless future.

He is a "Spirit of love," and "perfect love casteth out fear." All fear that hath torment is driven from our hearts when He gets full possession. The soul's conflict with God is ended. The doubtful or forbidden thing which caused the controversy is given up, and the whole being is pervaded with God's great calm. We then know the joy of being utterly His,

and this joy is "unspeakable and full of glory."

Just here the Christian Church makes a great blunder; a blunder which makes her responsible for much of the backsliding among young converts. In reading the Acts of the Apostles it is clearly seen that when the Apostles got people led to Christ and converted, they were not content. They never rested until they led them into *the fulness of the Spirit.* When they were "filled with the Holy Ghost" they were filled with a gladness that was all satisfying.

In too many places this is to-day an almost forgotten doctrine. It is much to be feared that thousands of sincere Christian workers know nothing of this fulness themselves, and consequently never dream of seeking to lead young converts into it. They lead them into the Lord's house, but leave them just within the door instead of leading them to the inner room where the sweet things of the family are talked over, and the great Father gives the best He has to His own. They

never show them their full right and liberty to the warm and blessed inner circle of the family of God.

The result is that when the first morning flush of the joy of salvation—the first joy of the new relation to God is over; these beginners realize a great want. They feel, "Is this all there is in religion? Can it give me no fuller substitute than this for the pleasures and amusements I parted with for its sake?" And as they are left in the wilderness instead of being led into Canaan, they are conquered by their memories of the past. Their longing for the fleshpots of Egypt becomes stronger than the bonds of the camp, and they return to the bondage of the past.

Filled with the exhilarations of the Spirit, the seducing calls of worldly pleasure have no power over us. Christians who have always the music of the Spirit's fulness have deaf ears for the siren songs of worldly and sinful amusements. You never hear them asking the poor, low, miserable question, "Is there

any harm in theatres, dancing, or card parties?" They do not need the brief drink at the world's fountain, which is so soon followed by a keener thirst. Full of God, they have the "well" of true gladness in their hearts. They carry about with them the springs of joy, and can drink whenever they like.

It is pitiful to think how much Christianity loses through her people never claiming their Pentecost. If only the hosts of God were led to this the bitter wail of faithful hearts about the craze for amusements and entertainments would be heard no more. Ministers would not have to struggle, as too many have to do now, to keep the church from becoming a mere agent for providing the people with recreation and amusement. In the comforts of the Holy Spirit, the deep heart-needs of our people would be grandly met. In the joy of worship and communion, and in the gladness of toil, they would find truest happiness. With great joy they would draw water from God's wells of salvation. Christian baby-

hood would be left behind, and the toys and trifles that please babies would not be needed. They would revel in the gladness of a robust, abounding Christian life.

The Spirit of Power.

Chapter VII.

The Spirit of Power.

"*Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*"—Acts i. 8.

WE have already seen that our Lord's disciples needed the baptism of the Holy Ghost to cleanse them from sin. A glance at their work before and after Pentecost makes it just as evident that they needed the Spirit's fulness as an enduement of *power for service*. They had been for three years in close companionship with Jesus. From His lips they had heard the great truths of His Gospel, and He had unfolded to them the teaching of the Scriptures concerning Himself. He had commissioned them to preach the Kingdom of God, to cast out devils, and had endowed them with gifts of healing. They had been eye-witnesses of His miracles, and the inner message of His parables had been explained to them. They had seen Him upon the cross, and

they had seen Him in His resurrection power, with Death finally conquered.

And yet with all these wonderful privileges, these men were still unqualified to obey their Lord's command to go and evangelise the nations. Something more they needed, and what that something was the Master told them in the words above quoted. While in most cases *true love* for Christ begins *at the Cross*, our *true service* for Christ begins *at Pentecost*. This is true for the Christian to-day as it was for these men. The Lord's command was ringing in their ears, but they could not, dare not attempt to carry it out until they had received their great equipment.

Failure after failure marked the work of these men prior to their baptism of fire. We cannot say how many converts they won for their Master. No doubt they did splendid work and much of it, but it was only after the anointing of flame came upon them that their work really began *to tell*. It is hardly too much to say that "more souls were converted

under Peter's first sermon on the Day of Pentecost than by all the disciples together, in all their ministry before that time." The great reason why so much earnest Christian work, prayer, and sacrifice to-day yield such meagre results is this—*a large proportion of our Lord's disciples are living on the wrong side of Pentecost. Chronologically* of course they are on the right side, but *experimentally* they have not reached it yet. Like the first disciples previous to that wonderful day, they know Jesus, they love Him, and they follow Him, some near and some afar off, but *they have never claimed their own personal Pentecost.* They have not received this the first great qualification, without which all other gifts and qualifications are practically powerless in the work of saving men.

Many of our people seem to have got very little further than those Ephesian converts who said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." We seldom hear a prayer for the Holy Ghost which is based upon the

assurance that His fulness is a personal present blessing that God urges upon us now. We are often grieved and amazed at the way in which some Christians refer to Him, and at their ignorance of His relations to Christian life and work. Yet we only have Christ with us as we have His Spirit in us, for in His glorified body Christ is with the Father. When He went there He sent the Holy Spirit to be His own continued life on earth.

The Holy Ghost is just as present with believers now as Jesus was with His disciples during His earthly ministry. It was their privilege to look upon, to hear, and to speak to the living Christ. They saw Him cleanse the leper, heal the palsied, give sight to the blind, and enable the dumb to sing His praise. They saw the deaf restored to hearing and the dead raised to life. We have not, as they had, the bodily presence of the Lord, but we have His living Spirit. He is with all His servants to-day, just as real a presence though unseen. We see no form, for He is *a Spirit*, but we hear His

voice in our souls and we see the power of His voice in the lives of others. He is working miracles all around us to-day as Jesus did when down here in the flesh. The age of one class of miracles may be past, but miracles just as glorious are witnessed now. Just as our Lord wrought miracles in the eyes of all, so the Holy Spirit works spiritual miracles in our midst to-day. They saw the lame walk, and heard the dumb sing; we see the drunkard made sober, the libertine made pure, and dead souls raised into glorious life. We see changes wrought in human hearts and lives that are utterly beyond all human power.

Oh that the Church of God would realize this! Just because He is unseen many Christians seem to forget the blessed fact of His presence. They forget that He is as certainly with them now as Jesus was with the twelve, and is just as able and willing to heal the sin-sick and to raise dead souls to life, as Jesus was to cleanse the leper and to call Lazarus from his tomb to the hearts and home of his

weeping sisters. For eighteen centuries He has been among men saving sinners and sanctifying believers, just as Jesus was present to heal and to forgive when here in the flesh.

We are often asked, "Have not all Christians the Spirit?" Certainly. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ He is none of His." But all are not filled with the Spirit;" and *having* the Spirit, and being *filled* with the Spirit, are different things in degree. The disciples *had* the Spirit before Pentecost, but on that day they were *filled*, and we have seen with what wonderful results. Let us borrow a well-known illustration of this difference between *having in part* and *having the fulness*. Egypt has the river Nile all the year round, but as a fertilizing power the Nile is practically useless till it is in flood and overflows its banks. Then it bestows the needed blessing upon every foot of land it touches. It is when we are filled with the Spirit to the point of overflowing that we become a power for good to others. It is then that

"rivers of living water" flow from our innermost being, and others are blest. Drops are all very well, and we are grateful for them, but the land is so thirsty in these days that we deeply need the "rivers." Thank God we may have them!

Christ longs to give us not only "Life," but "Life more abundantly." In St. John's Gospel, chap. iv., He speaks of His Spirit as "a well of water *in* us," and in chap. vii. He speaks of the *out-flowing "rivers."* It is when we reach this point that others are richly blessed through our lives, prayers, and toil. Many of us are like old pumps with cracked buckets and worm-eaten valves. To get a little of the water of life from us some one has to shake us again and again. Even then the little we do comes from us with sundry gurgling, grumbling protests, and the moment the pressure is off us the effort dies away with weary sighs. But receiving from God the *infilling*, we gladly, joyously go to men with the *out-flowing*, and "everything lives whither the river cometh."

"Then will the personal Pentecost make us all evangelists?" we are often asked. Certainly not! for it is not given to fit us all for the one kind of work. We are often deeply pained by our people comparing pastoral work with the work of our evangelists. God does not intend all ministers to be evangelists, as some of us are, and few have our privileges of freedom from ordinary church worry and care. In the gift of the Holy Ghost to the Church there is a great diversity of operation: "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." All different orders and methods of work, but all fitting one into another, and all working for the one great end—"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

This baptism is not to make us all alike. It is for women as well as for men, and for learned and illiterate alike. The promise is to all the children of God, and it is given to enable us to do to the best advantage that work in our Master's

vineyard to which, in His love and wisdom, He has called us. Though some of us *did* become evangelists when we received this anointing, the Lord's call and gift were there before, but dormant. For some of us our day of Pentecost marks an era in our past, almost as clear and startling as our conversion to God. We bless God, and we and many others shall have to bless Him for ever for the time when we claimed as our own the baptism of fire.

This equipment is not eloquence, nor is it intellectual force, or keenness. It is not any human gift, power, or qualification whatever. "It may be added to gifts of learning, as with Paul; or to gifts of eloquence, as with Apollos; but it may be given to ignorant and unlearned men like Peter and John." It is a power altogether distinct from all gifts of mind and speech, and the power which alone can vitalise them and make them effective in the work of God. It is this marvellous something, this holy unction pervading what we do and say, which tells those to

whom we appeal that we are sent of God. It is this which converts a look into a saving message, and which touches into mightiest effectiveness the simplest word we speak or the feeblest effort we put forth. To this full equipment for Christian life and service every believer in Jesus is called of God and called *Now.*

The Spirit of Sympathy.

Chapter VIII.

The Spirit of Sympathy.

"*My heart's desire . . . for Israel is, that they might be saved.*"—Romans x. 1.

WE are told in the Gospels that when Jesus looked upon the multitudes of people around Him, and saw their godless, hopeless condition, He was "filled with compassion." His great loving heart went out to them in longing that they might have a shepherd who would lead them into God's own pastures. The Holy Spirit feels towards the perishing multitudes who surround us to-day just the same yearning, loving sympathy. He is keenly touched by the blindness and misery of the Christless. The pathos of their loss and of their suffering is near to His heart, and, like our Lord when here in the flesh, He is always longing to help them. All true sympathy with human wretchedness and need is born of Him, and when "filled with the Spirit"

we are filled with a sympathy for the unsaved that begets a passionate desire to lead them to God.

How clearly this is seen in the case of the first disciples! Under the Pentecostal anointing they were filled with their Lord's own compassion for the Christless crowd. All their small personal ambitions were sunk, all their clamour for personal precedence was lost in a deep longing to rescue the perishing. The danger and misery of unbelievers touched them to the quick. Their Lord's love shed abroad in their hearts by His Spirit led them to risk all things that the people might be saved. Paul's desire for the salvation of Israel was so heartfelt, and his prayer for them was so intense, that we are startled and half-shocked at the sacrifice he declares he could make to reach this result. His sufferings, toils, and travels attest the sincerity of his strongest declarations of sympathy for unconverted men.

As the spirit of Pentecost has never left His Church, this sympathy is still manifest in all Spirit-filled lives. It was this

that led John Smith of Cudworth to pray, sometimes for hours together, for his unsaved hearers. It was this that gave his prayers such intensity and feeling, that in front of where he knelt the floor was often wet with a semi-circle of tears. It was this that made John Walsh sometimes spend half the night in pleading with God. When remonstrated with by his wife, he could only say, "Woman! I have the souls of three thousand people on my heart, and I know not how it is with many of them." It was this that led the saintly Summerfield to preach his life out before he was thirty-three. It was this that led Murray McCheyne to break down his constitution, and go to heaven before reaching life's noon.

Read the lives of some of the heroes and heroines who have gone to the Lord's coronation from the great Methodist Church. The *burden of souls* was the burden of their lives. They carried the burden of the souls of others to God, till others carried the burden of their sins to the Cross. They wept for others as sup-

pliants till others wept for themselves as penitents. They cried in heartfelt sympathy, "Lord, save sinners!" till sinners in heartfelt penitence cried, "Lord, save me!" The word of God burned like a fire in their bones while those around them remained unreconciled to God.

We sometimes fear that this sympathy is dying out in many churches; that a tearful, tender sorrow for the sinner is becoming a thing of the past. In this age of intense pleasure-seeking, it looks as if we are willing to share the joys of Christ, but shun "the fellowship of His sufferings" in this matter. How terribly content many of us are with the present dearth of conversions! How calm and satisfied we often are amid the awful havoc wrought in our midst by sin! How comfortably we can sit in chapels where a penitent is never seen from year to year! How few tears drop and how few hearts ache at seeing so few responses to the loving call of God! How indifferent many Christians are to the fate of perish-

ing men and women! How few are shocked by the tragedies enacted daily, as men and women, by our very doors, die in their sins! How few of us realize that for these very people, He whom we love and follow was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief!" How little we feel of real anguish while men and women whom we know shiver through the veil into a Christless eternity!

This lack of sympathy is so marked and widespread that we sometimes wonder if such Christians believe their Bible at all. Do they believe that in this so-called Christian England of ours there are thousands who hardly know anything at all of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do they realize that these people are intensely loved by Him, and have been redeemed by His precious blood? Do they believe that the sins of these men and women are filling their lives with wretchedness and misery, and withering all that is manly and womanly in their character? Do they realize that the great heart of the heavenly Father is yearning over these

lost ones with an infinite pity? Do they believe that the salvation which they themselves claim to have received may be the happy possession of these wanderers from God? Can their guilt be all pardoned, and their moral fetters broken off? Can the dark stain be cleansed from their hearts and characters till they walk and worship daily "in the beauty of holiness?" Can these tossed and restless ones have rest of mind, rest of heart, and peace of conscience through faith in Christ? Can the Lord Jesus make a pure, bright home for Himself in their now dark and sinful hearts? Are they speeding to the quenchless agony of a godless eternity? Can they shun it and have the heaven of God's eternal presence? Do we really believe what we think we believe? Do we believe what the Bible says about the awful danger of impenitent men? Too many of us act as if we did not believe these things, but our conduct will come into line with our creed only when we are filled with the spirit of sympathy.

It is He who enriches and enlarges our own religious experience, and shows us more clearly the deep blessedness of being the Lord's. It is He who interprets to us more and more fully the "manifold more" we have in this "present time," and whispers to us more and more sweetly of the "life everlasting in the world to come." As we taste and see more fully "the unsearchable riches of Christ," our own happy lot makes us long more ardently for others to share in our hopes and joys. The Holy Spirit lights up for us the Word of God. He makes more vivid to us the danger of the godless, and impresses on our hearts their terrible need. He contrasts in our minds our happy lot with their awful outlook, till His own pity for them swells in our souls. Filled with Him, His tender sympathy runs through all our work for God and men. He gives the noblest meaning to Ruskin's declaration that "there is no potency except that of help, and no ambition, except ambition to save."

This sympathy is soon felt by those

whom we try to win. We have known cases where people have been led first to anxiety about their souls through their seeing the anxiety of others about them. It gives a tremor to the hand we lay upon them when we plead with them for God. It sometimes starts the tear in our eye when we look them in the face and urge them "to flee from the wrath to come." It gives a ring of reality to our words as we tell sinners of our Lord's love and His great longing to save them. It sends a pathos through the sermon that often reaches the hardest heart. Given and used by the Spirit, this sympathy sometimes leads men to say, "Well, if that man feels so much for me, it is time I felt for myself. If that man loves my soul so much, and longs so much for my salvation, what must his Master feel about me?" Full of the Spirit's sympathy, His tenderness will touch our word and work, and answering tenderness will be roused in the sinful and lead them to God in true contrition of soul.

How is it Obtained?

Chapter IX.

How is it Obtained?

THE way into this fulness is so similar to the way into the kingdom when we first came for pardon and regeneration, that our words may possibly seem to some to be very elementary. But, as the way into the possession of all God's great gifts is very simple and plain to the sincere spirit, we hope to help some of our readers who long for this full Pentecostal anointing. If it is to be ours three conditions are necessary.

I. There must be *purity of motive.* In this matter certainly "the eye" must "be single" if "the whole body" is to "be full of light." In the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel God promises to give His Spirit to His people so fully that they shall be cleansed from all their sins. This anointing, He declares, will make their lives so beautiful and their toil so effective that He will be able to "increase

them with men like a flock." Lest they should take the joy and credit of this true revival to themselves, He makes it plain that the great blessing given to and through them is not for their sakes, but for His own great Name's sake, that it "may be hallowed among the heathen" around them. The great end of this work of grace was that the eyes of the heathen might be turned to Him who is the source of all blessing, and whose abiding smile is the best of all possessions.

Here we see how we are to come to God when we seek the fulness of the Spirit, which alone can make us pure, and enable us to make the most of our gifts and opportunities in His service. We have already seen that the life of utter consecration is a life of *real luxury*. All those who walk in the full sunshine of the Divine smile are agreed in this. Hearing and seeing this, it is possible for us to seek this fulness simply for the sake of *our own pleasure*. If we have no higher motive than this, if we seek a full

salvation looking only at the fuller peace, joy, and hope it may bring to us, we are likely to be disappointed.

If the pleasure we seek takes the form of *fame or popularity*, the result will be the same. The motive is not a true and pure one, and God cannot honour it. In the eyes of all who are in sympathy with the work of God it is a high privilege indeed to be much used in His blessed service. To have the great joy of leading men and women to God "like a flock" is one of the highest honours God can bestow upon His children. We may think it a desirable and enviable thing thus to help others, but we must not seek this power simply for the place it gives in the public eye and the happiness it may bring to us. It is as true here as it is everywhere that if we seek happiness for her own sake she will ever elude our grasp. If we seek to be good and useful, happiness will attend our steps and never leave us. If we are thus to be purified and made meet for fullest and highest service, we must seek the

infilling of the Spirit to promote the glory of God and the welfare of our fellow-men.

II. *There must be a full and glad surrender.*—When we are first convicted of sin and see our need of Christ, there is generally some one thing which becomes the arena of our controversy with God. There is some darling sin, some favourite idol which is the last thing we are willing to give up. Among the forbidden things there is usually some pet Agag we are anxious to spare from the death of the enemies of God in our lives. As a rule the same thing happens when we are "convicted for holiness" and realize our need of being "filled with the Spirit." Something touching our reputation or our enjoyment has to be given up, and the wrench is often a severe one. People will sometimes candidly tell us they do not intend to come to our Holiness meetings. When asked why, they say they know they would be made to feel uncomfortable; they have certain things in their lives which are incompatible with a

full salvation, and are not prepared to part with them.

It is sometimes an unnecessary indulgence, or an association upon which the Lord cannot smile. Sometimes it is the fear of greater responsibility which the fuller blessing might bring. We have met cases where people have held back for years through the fear that if Spirit-filled they would have work to do from which they shrank, or have to become more generous in their giving to God and to cases of need. They did not realize that the fuller baptism might make congenial the task from which they held back, or make it a joy to minister more freely to the poor and needy.

Sometimes the Lord allows us to make a test of something we fancy we may have to part with, or something we fear we may have to do if we get this fuller blessing. The writer was permitted to think that if he obtained it he would have to go to China as a missionary. From this he greatly shrank for very many reasons. He knows now that God never

intended him to go, but he had to be willing to go before the Lord could give him the blessing he was seeking. This foolish and selfish fear to trust the Lord fully cost him weeks of unnecessary pain and tears, and we meet many who have made a similar mistake.

Oh, how foolish thus to doubt the loving God! He does not love us the less because we long to love Him the more. He does not cease to do His best for us when we seek to do our best for Him. He will take nothing from us except what we are better without, and for every sacrifice we make for Him He gives to us "manifold more." He will call us to no task without fitting us for it, and to our joy in doing it for Him He will add His own "Well done!" Willing to be anything, do anything, or go anywhere, at our Lord's command, we reach the point where He can give us the Pentecostal blessing for which we pray.

III. *There must be implicit, present trust.*—When the heart says, "None of self and all of Thee," the word "waiting"

in the well-known consecration hymn is very misleading, and we strongly object to it. Of course there is a beautiful sense in which it is blessed to wait upon God, but that is not the sense in which the word is used here. We know many good people who have been "waiting for the fire" for nearly twenty years, and they look as if they would keep on waiting to the end. The injunction to "tarry" for this anointing is not *post-Pentecostal*, and does not refer to us at all. *Trusting*, not waiting, is the medium through which this blessing comes.

As we saw in a previous paper the first disciples had to "tarry," because in New Testament fulness the Holy Spirit had not then come to His Church. On that eventful day He did come, and thank God He has never been withdrawn. This means that if we come to God with the right motive, He not only urges but commands us to be "filled with the Spirit" *now*. We are to seek and claim it in prayer, for He gives the blessing "to them that ask Him; but we are to pray and *trust*, and

not wait as if God *might* answer our prayer at some future, indefinite time. He wants us to come to Him with the prayer of faith, and *take* our personal Pentecost at His hands as a glorious *present blessing*, and live and toil moment by moment in its gladness and power.

We must not *wait for feeling* before we take God at His Word. In seeking pardon people often want *to feel first* and trust afterwards, and we often have some difficulty in persuading them to believe at once and leave their feelings to God. We find just the same difficulty with many who seek this fuller blessing. They come to God with a set of preconceived notions for which they have no warrant. They believe that the Holy Spirit is a spirit of gladness, and expect that when He takes full possession they will receive joyous thrills and marvellous spiritual shocks that will move their souls with Hallelujah earthquakes.

Dear reader, remember that "the promise is unto you" and the blessing is for you. If you seek it on God's own

conditions, the moment you trust Him He says it is yours. Take Him at His word, assume that He keeps His word and does His part, seeing you have done yours. Feeling sure that He must have been true to His promise, "Go in this thy might," doubting nothing, and He will lead thee to victory. Hold on to the bare Word of God, and all the feelings you need will come in the right way and at the right time. You will then live and toil to make others happy, which is a much better test and proof of our nearness to God than our wanting to be very happy ourselves.

In the same way we must avoid *waiting to see special results* before we trust. God likes to be trusted, and it may help us to honour Him if these special feelings and special results are withheld from us for a time as our Lord teaches us the lesson of faith. When the writer claimed his birthright he had no ecstatic thrills and no extra joyous emotions. He knew his surrender was complete, and having taken God at His word *he was sure*

the experience was his, though he felt little different. He was at peace, for the controversy with God was over. For days he saw no extra results to his preaching, but kept on, feeling certain that God could not fail to keep His word. Without anything special either in emotions or in fruits to his labours, he believed he had received this full anointing, and the seals and attestations of God came in His own good time.

These articles have been written from a deep heart-conviction that the relation of the Holy Ghost to Christian life and work is in many Churches to-day an almost forgotten doctrine. Volumes of splendid sermons have recently been issued that do not contain a single reference to Him, and this *in His own dispensation.* The pitiful cry for amusements, entertainments, and recreation in the Churches is but the seeking in a wrong direction to satisfy a deeply-felt want. It is the half-inarticulate, misunderstood cry of the Church's heart for a more satisfying sense of the presence and blessing

of God. Thank God! there is a growing spirit of inquiry in our midst, and hundreds of sincere disciples of Christ are asking for a deeper spiritual work in their own hearts and lives, and a richer spiritual unction upon their work for God and men. It is all in the Holy Spirit. Hundreds are realizing that the only true wealth is the Christ-like in our own character, and help given to others in Christ's name and power. They see that such riches cannot be taken from us by death, and cannot be scorched by the fires of judgment. They see the frightful sins in society, and the deep need of the perishing. They see, too, the impotence of the Christian Church to cope with these evils in her present low spiritual state. Amid much that depresses these evident signs of a great spiritual awakening are full of hope and cheer.

Let it be yours and mine, then, my readers, to take now, and to keep moment by moment, our glorious birthright in Jesus Christ. Content with nothing less, let us live, pray, and toil in the fulness

of the Spirit. Then, filled with purity, gladness, and sympathy, and clothed with the Divine might, whether our work be inside or outside, whatever our sphere or form of holy toil, the Pentecostal power will pervade all we say and do. Amid human sorrow we shall be calm and glad, and in human weakness we shall be strong in the strength of God. We shall then know in our own experience the meaning of our Master's own word, "Greater things than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father."

How it is Retained.

Chapter X.

How it is Retained.

"*Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.*"—Eph. iv. 30.

THERE is no state of grace attainable in this world where we cannot be tempted, and from which we cannot fall. Just as our remaining in the kingdom of God at all is conditional, so there are conditions that must be complied with if we are to retain "the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ."

I. *There must be constant implicit obedience.* "The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." As we have already seen, Christ's twofold purpose concerning us is to restore us to His image and to use us in His kingdom. The Holy Spirit dwells within to work out this purpose in and through us, and is thwarted in His mission if we disobey Him. The test of our friendship for Christ is our obedience to His will, and that will the Holy Ghost reveals to us

step by step and day by day. When He has made the path of duty plain, we grieve Him if we decline to walk in it, and to the extent to which we grieve Him we are robbed of the might and music of His presence.

Take the oft-debated subject of *Confession* of having received this blessing. Many sincere and sensitive Christians are repelled and hurt by the loud, half-boastful, self-assertive way in which some good people shout that they are cleansed from all sin. We sympathise with these tempted and hindered ones. Their feeling that holiness promotes humility is certainly Scriptural. One of the first results of its presence is to save a man from the spirit that says, "Stand aside, for I am holier than thou!" The more a man has of the presence of God the less he has of self-assertion and pride.

Yet, while there is a kind of confession that does harm, surely there is a way of testifying to the best our Lord has done for us which can only cheer and help the sincere souls who listen to us. It is a great

blessing to be saved at all, and to be fully saved means fulness of blessing. There are thousands around us who are awfully dissatisfied with their present low level of Christian life and experience. If we have been lifted to a higher and richer, we owe it to them and to our Lord to "tell it out." The saintly Fletcher tells us that more than once he forfeited his close walk with God by not declaring to others what the Lord had done for him. If the good Spirit filling our hearts prompts us thus to help others, it is at our peril that we turn a deaf ear to His call.

Our obedience may be tested by a call to *sacrifice*. As we rise higher in the Divine life our circle of illumination becomes wider, and we see many things in a new and fuller light. Or, through changed conditions in our relations to others, we may discover that some things in our life that are "lawful" have ceased to be "expedient." At once the Spirit whispers, "You must give that up." Scores of Spirit-filled Christians have lost their full anointing at this point through

arguing with God and holding on to the thing he has vetoed. Some we know who have carried the disobedience so far that they have had to say with Saul after his flagrant disobedience at Gilgal "God has departed from me." Whatever the nature of the sacrifice to which we are called of God, we must at once obey if we are to retain our Pentecostal anointing.

Many dear souls have disobeyed a distinct call to *work*. The Spirit has prompted them to speak to some special person, to deliver some special message, or to go to some special place, and they have shirked the service. When the Spirit of God sent Jonah to Nineveh, and he ran away to Tarshish instead, he had anything but a prosperous voyage. Until he came back to the point where he went counter to the will of his Master, he had a terribly hard time. If we are to continue in the full light of the Divine smile we must be ever "obedient unto the heavenly vision."

II. *We must constantly study the Word*

of God. "He shall take of Mine and show it unto you."—St. John xvi. 15. The Word of God is the bread and water of life to our souls, and it is ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. He is the great Sanctifier, and the means He uses is "the truth." When our Lord had His awful wilderness temptation, He met and repelled every assault of Satan by the Word of God. The Word of God is our defensive armour, and also our weapon of attack—"the sword of the Spirit." The Bible is our armoury, but if our panoply of war be in the armoury when we meet the foe in the field, we are defenceless. We must have the Word in our memory and in our heart. Then the Spirit of God has the means of victory present and every fiery dart of the Evil One can be turned aside.

He is the Spirit of power in our toil for God and men, and He always works by means of Divine truth. It is a question if He ever leads any one to the Cross without in some way or other using the Word He has given to us. If we cease

to study that Word, we have not the means at hand by which He makes our work effective in blessing those for whom we toil. Every observant Christian can endorse one of Moody's favourite sayings, that he has "never known any one much used in saving men who was not a man or woman of the Bible." In the same way He keeps our sympathy with men fresh and deep by lighting up to us God's declarations of the misery and danger of the Christless. He makes us strong for holy toil, and quickens our incentives to it by filling us with constant gladness as He interprets to us the precious promises of God.

III. *We must shun all impurity.* "Sensual, not having the Spirit."—Jude 19. The Spirit of God is *Holy*, and if He is to fill abidingly the temple of our body, we must allow Him to keep it clean. If we hang impure pictures upon the walls of our imagination He will leave the room. If we indulge in unclean thoughts or memories He will leave us to them, for He is pure. If we allow our thoughts

to become a chamber for unseen sensual orgies we must not expect to remain Spirit-filled. Disastrous mischief may be wrought in our soul's relations to God by a fifteen minutes' indulgence in lustful reverie and imagination—"Keep thyself pure."

May we not also say that though it may come more slowly, the same result will follow gross living and all that means *sensual indulgence?* In things legitimate, there is a self-denial that God honours, and of which, we fear, many Christians never dream. Christ has redeemed our body as well as our soul, and both are alike to be kept sacred for Him. The body is His temple in which He loves to dwell, and the instrument through which He works out His purposes through us among those around us. If we use our bodies in any way that unfits them for this glorious mission, it must grieve the pure Spirit of God who dwells in our hearts.

If we begin to pamper and indulge our lower nature, to eat and drink to excess,

and to indulge in unnecessary luxuries merely to please the appetite, we are not likely to remain spiritually-minded. It is just possible that many a Christian worker is limited in his usefulness through his breath reeking with whiskey fumes and his clothes with the smell of tobacco. Those who "bear the vessels of the Lord" are commanded to "be clean." If we cease to "be clean" our service in the temple of God will cease to be fully pleasing to Him and effective in his service.

IV. *We must avoid laziness.* "Stir up the gift which is in thee."—2 Tim. i. 6. It is very significant to read in the Acts that those who were "filled with the Holy Ghost" on the Day of Pentecost had the anointing repeated. We cannot help and bless others without its costing us something ourselves, and the "virtue" we give off in holy toil we must renew in communion with God. As we spend our spiritual power in saving others, we must ever come back to God for fresh supplies. But when the blessed

baptism is renewed to us it is for renewed service for God and men. Our Lord will not give grace to waste.

We have talked with men who were once successful soul-winners. With quivering lips and many tears they have told us of departed power and glory, and they have assured us that they lost their anointing through no wilful sin. Actual sin is not necessary to grieve the Spirit of God, and lead Him to withdraw some of His power and blessing from us. He wants to get *all that is possible* out of us for God and for our fellow-men. If we frustrate this purpose, if we become content with past triumphs, if we settle down into easy, indolent living, telling of victories in the past instead of seeking to win fresh ones in the present, our power to win them will soon be gone. But if we render a prompt and glad obedience to His every call, if "the Word of God dwell in us richly" and ever fresh and vivid, if we rely on Him to keep us clean in thought, word, and deed, if we respond to His every call to

action, doing our work with His enthusiasm (which is reason set on fire), then from year to year our life will be Spirit-filled, and thus beautiful and full of healing, and at our *heimgang* we shall have "an abundant entrance."

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